

New York Saturday Evening Post

A HOME WEEKLY FOR WINTER NIGHTS AND SUMMER DAYS.

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NO. 269.

Victoria; or, The Heiress of Castle Cliffe.

BY MRS. MAY AGNES FLEMING,

Author of "The Dark Secret; or, The Mystery of Fontelle Hall," "An Awful Mystery; or, Sybil Campbell, the Queen of the Isle," etc.

CHAPTER I.

AT THE THEATER.

The theater was crowded. The pit, reeking and steaming, was one swaying sea of human faces. The galleries were vivid semi-circles of eyes, blue, black, brown and gray; and the boxes and the upper tiers were rapidly filling, for was not this the benefit-night of Mademoiselle Vivia? and had not all the theater-going world of London been half mad about Mademoiselle Vivia ever since her first appearance on the boards of the — theater? Posters and playbills announced it her benefit. Madam Rumor announced it her last appearance on any stage. There were wonderful tales going about this same Vivia, the actress. Her beauty was an undisputed fact by all; so was her marvelous talent in her profession; and her icy virtue was a household word. Every one in the house probably knew what was to be known of her history—how the manager of the house stumbled upon her accidentally in an obscure, third-rate Parisian playhouse; how, struck by her beauty and talent, he had taken her away, had her instructed for two years, and how, at the end of that time, three months previous to this particular night, she had made her *debut*, and taken the good people of London by storm. Gouty old dukes and apoplectic earls had knelt in dozens at her feet, with offers of magnificent settlements, superb diamonds, no end of blank checks, carriages and horses, and a splendid establishment, and been spurned for their pains. Mademoiselle Vivia had won, during her professional career, something more than admiration and love—the respect of all, young and old. And yet that same gossiping lady, Madam Rumor, whispered low, that the actress had managed to lose her heart after all. Madam Rumor softly intimated, that a young nobleman, marvelously beautiful to look upon, and marvelously rich to back it, had laid his heart, hand and name most honorably and romantically at her fair feet; but people took the whisper for what it was worth, and were a little dubious about believing it implicitly. No one was certain of anything; and yet the knowing ones raised their glasses with a peculiar smile to ascertain the stage-box occupied by three young men, and with an inward conviction that the secret lay there. One of the three gentlemen sitting in it—a large, well-made, good-looking personage of thirty or so—was sweeping the house himself, lorgnette in hand, bowing, and smiling, and criticizing.

"And there comes that oldger, the Marquis of Devon, rouged to the eyes; and that stiff antediluvian on his arm; all pearl-powder and pearls, false ringlets and more rouge, is his sister. There goes that oily little cheat, Sylvester Sweet, among the swells, as large as life; and there's Miss Blanche Chester with her father. Pretty little thing, isn't she, Lisle?" The person thus addressed—a very tall, very thin, very pale and very insipid-looking young person, most stylishly got up, regardless of expense, leaned forward, and stared out of a pair of very dull and very expressionless gray eyes, at an exceedingly pretty and graceful girl.

"Aw, yes! Very pretty indeed!" he hissed, with a languid drawl; "and has more money, they say, than she knows what to do with. Splendid catch, eh? But look there. Who are those? By Jove! what a handsome woman!"

The attention of Lord Lisle—for the owner of the dull eyes and lantern jaws was that distinguished gentleman—had been drawn to a party who had just entered the box opposite. They were two ladies, three gentlemen, and a little child, and Sir Roland Cliffe. The first speaker leaning over to see, opened his eyes very wide, with a low whistle of astonishment.

"Such a lovely face! Such a noble head! Such a grand air!" raved young Lord Lisle, whose heart was as inflammable as a Lucifer-match, and caught fire as easily.

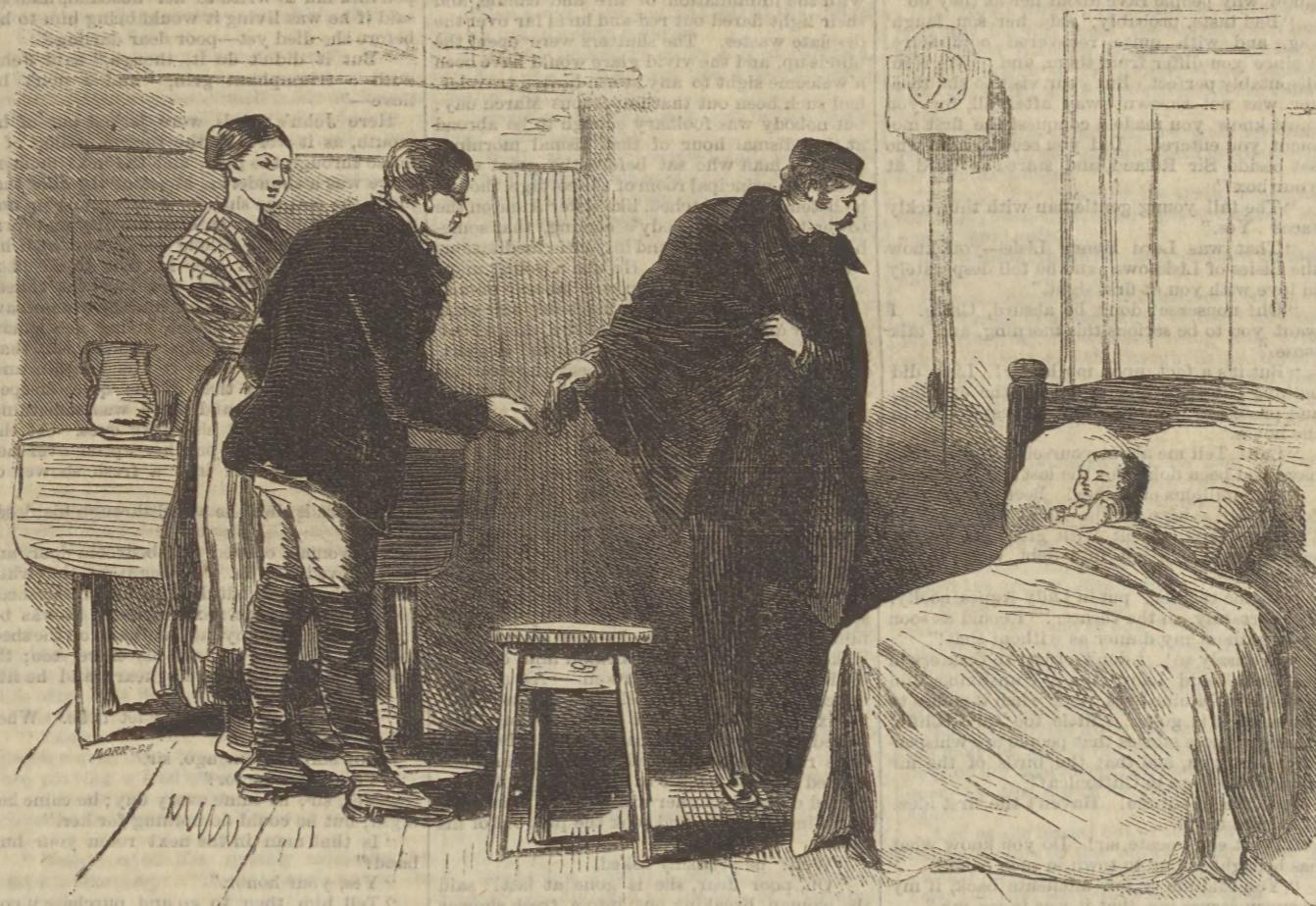
Sir Roland raised his shoulders and eyebrows together, and stroked his flowing beard.

"Which one?" he coolly asked. "Belle blonde, or jolie blonde?"

"The lady in pink satin and diamonds! Such splendid eyes! Such a manner! Such grace! She might be a princess!"

Hearing this, the third occupant of the box leaned forward also, from the lazy, recumbent position he had hitherto indulged in, and glanced across the way. He looked the younger of the two—slender and boyish—and evidently not more than nineteen or twenty, wearing the undress uniform of a lieutenant of dragoons, which set off his eminently handsome face and figure to the best possible advantage. He, too, opened his large blue Saxon eyes slightly, as they rested on the objects of Lord Lisle's raptures, and exchanged a smile with Sir Roland Cliffe.

The lady thus unconsciously apostrophized and stared at was lying back in her chair, and



He dropped a purse heavy with guineas into John's willing palm, then going over looked at the sleeping infant.

smiling herself very much at her ease. It was a blonde face of the purest type; the skin, satin-smooth and white; the blue veins scarcely traceable under the milk-white surface; the oval cheeks tinged with the faintest shade of rose, deepening into vividness in the thin lips.

The eyes were large, blue, and bright—very coldly bright though; the eyebrows light and indistinct; and the hair, which was of a flaxen face, was rolled back from the beautiful face; *a la Marie Stuart*. Light hair; fair blue eyes, and colorless complexion usually make up rather an insipid style of prettiness; but this lady was not at all insipid. The eyes, placed close together, had a look of piercing intentness; the thin lips decidedly compressed, had an air of resolute determination; and from the crown of her flaxen head to the sole of her sandals foot, she looked as high and haughty as any lady in the land. Her dress was pale rose satin, with a profusion of rare old point, yellow as saffron with age, and precious as rubies. Diamonds ran like a river of light round the beautiful arched neck, and blazed on the large, snow-white, rounded arms. Her fan was of gold and ebony, and marabout feathers; and she managed it with a hand like Hebe's own. One dainty foot, peeping out from under the rosy skirt, showed the arched instep, tapering ankle and rounded flexibility, of the same type; and, to her fingers' tips, she looked the lady. Her age it was impossible to guess, for old Time deals gallantly with those flaxen-haired, pearly-skinned beauties; and Lord Lisle could not have told, for his life, whether to set her down as twenty or thirty. She certainly did not look demure; and her figure, though tall and slight, and delicate, was unmistakably matured; and then her style of dress, and the brilliant opera cloak of scarlet and white, slipping off her shoulders, was matured too. She and her companion formed as striking a contrast as could be met with in the house. For the latter was a *prononcee* brunnette, and a very full-blown brunnette at that, with lazy, rolling black eyes, a profusion of dead-black hair, worn in braids and bendeaux, and entwined with pearls; her large and showy person was arrayed in slight mourning; but her handsome, rounded, high-colored face was breaking into smiles every other instant, as her lazy eyes strayed from face to face as she bent to greet her friends. A lovely little boy, of some six years, richly dressed, with long golden curls falling over his shoulders, and splendid dark eyes straying like her own around the house, leaned lightly against her knee. They were mother and son, though they looked little like it; and Mrs. Leicester Cliffe was a buxom widow of five-and-twenty. The black, roving eyes rested at last on the opposite box, and the incessant

smile came over the Dutch face as she bowed to one of the gentlemen—Sir Roland Cliffe.

"How grandly she sits!—how beautiful she is!" broke out Lord Lisle, in a fresh ecstasy. "Who in the world is she, Sir Roland?"

"You had better ask my beloved nephew here," said Sir Roland, with a careless motion toward the young officer, "and ask him at the same time how he would like you for a step-father."

Lord Lisle stared from one to the other, and then at the fair lady aghast.

"Why—how—you don't mean to say that it is Lady Agnes Shirley?"

"But I do, though! Is it possible, Lisle, that you, a native of Sussex yourself, have never seen my sister?"

"I never have!" exclaimed Lord Lisle, with a look of hopeless amazement; "and that is really your mother, Shirley?"

The lieutenant of dragoons, who was sitting in such a position that the curtain screened him completely from the audience, while it commanded a full view of the stage, nodded with a half laugh; and Lord Lisle's astonished bewilderment was a sight to see.

"But she is so young; she does not look over twenty."

"She is eight years older than I, and I am verging on thirty," said Sir Roland, taking out a penknife and beginning to pare his nails; "but those blondes never grow old. What do you think of the black beauty beside her?"

"She is fat!" said Lord Lisle, with gravity.

"My dear fellow, don't apply that term to a lady; say plump, or inclined to *embonpoint*!"

She is rather of the Dutch make, I confess; but we can pardon that in a widow, and you must own she's a splendid specimen of the Low Country, Flemish style of loveliness. Paul Rubens, for instance, would have gone mad about her; perhaps you have never noticed, though, as you do not much affect the fine arts, that all his Madonnas and Venususes have the same plentiful supply of blood, and brawn, and muscle, that our fair relative yonder rejoices in."

"She is your relative, then?"

"Leicester Cliffe, rest his soul! was my cousin. That is her son and heir, that little shave beside her—fine little fellow, isn't he? and a Cliffe, every inch of him. What are you thinking of, Cliffe?"

"Were you speaking to me?" said the lieutenant, looking up abstractedly.

"Yes. I want to know what makes you so insufferably stupid to-night? What are you thinking of, man—Vivia?"

The remark might be nearer the truth than the speaker thought, for a slight flush rose to the girl-like cheek of Lieutenant Cliffe Shirley.

"She took your flowers, Shirley—she actually did," cried Lord Lisle, with one of his blank stares; "and left mine, that were a thousand times prettier, just where they fell!"

"Very extraordinary," remarked Mr. Sweet,

one of his bright smiles and sidelong glances. "But what do all the good folks mean by leaving? I thought there was to be a farce, or ballet, or something."

"So there is; but as they won't see Vivia, they don't care for staying. And I think the best thing we can do is to follow their example."

What do you say to coming along with us, Sweet? We are going to have a small supper at my rooms this evening."

Mr. Sweet, with many smiles, made his acknowledgments, and accepted at once; and rising, the four passed out, and were borne along by the crowd into the open air. Sir Roland's night-cab was in waiting, and being joined by three or four other young men, they were soon dashing at breakneck speed toward a West-End hotel.

No man in all London ever gave such *petite soupers* as Sir Roland Cliffe, and no one ever thought of declining his invitations. On the present occasion, the hilarity waxed fast and furious. The supper was a perfect *chef d'œuvre*, the claret deliciously cool after the hot theater; the sherry, like liquid gold, and the port, fifty years old, at least. All showed their appreciation of it, too, by draining bumper after bumper, until the lights of the room, and everything in it, were dancing hornpipes before their eyes—all but Mr. Sweet and Lieutenant Shirley. Mr. Sweet drank sparingly, and had a smile and an answer for everybody; and the lieutenant scarcely ate or drank at all, and was abstracted and silent.

"Do look at Shirley!" hiccupped Lord Lisle, whose eyes were starting fishily out of his head, and whose hair and shirt-front were splashed with wine; "he looks as *sol*—yes—as *sol*—as a coffin!"

"Hallo, Cliffe, my boy! don't be the death's-head at the feast!" shouted Sir Roland, with a flushed face, waving his glass over his head—"here, lads, is a bumper to Vivian!"

"Vivian!" "Vivian!" ran from lip to lip. Even Mr. Sweet rose to honor the toast; but Lieutenant Shirley, with wrinkled brows and flashing eyes, sat still, and glanced round at the servant who stood at his elbow with a salver and a letter thereon.

"Note for you, lieutenant," insinuated the waiter. "A little boy brought it here. Said there was no answer expected, and left."

"I say, Cliffe, what have you there? A dun!" shouted impetuous Sir Roland.

"With your permission I will see," rather coolly responded the young officer, breaking the seal.

Mr. Sweet, sitting opposite, kept his eyes intently fixed on his face, and saw it first flush scarlet, and then turn deathly white.

"That's no dun, I'll swear," again lisped Lord Lisle. "Look at the writing! A fairy could scarcely trace anything so light. And look at the paper—pink-tinted and gilt-edged. The fellow has got a *billet-doux*!"

"Who is she, Shirley?" called half a dozen voices.

But Lieutenant Shirley crumpled the note in his hand, and rose abruptly from the table.

"Gentlemen—Sir Roland—you will have the goodness to excuse me! I regret extremely being obliged to leave you. Good-night!"

He had strode to the door, opened it, and disappeared before any of the company had recovered their maudlin senses sufficiently to call him back. Mr. Sweet always had his senses about him; but that shining gentleman was wise in his generation, and he knew when Lieutenant Shirley's cheek paled, and brow knitted, and eye flashed, he was not exactly the person to be trifled with; so he only looked after him, and then at his wine, with a thoughtful smile. He would have given all the spare change he had about him to have donned an invisible cap, and walked after him through the silent streets, dimly lit by the raw coming morning, and to have jumped after him into the cab Lieutenant Shirley hailed and entered. On he flew through the still streets, stopping at last before a quiet hotel in a retired part of the city. A muffled figure—a female figure—wrapped in long cloak, and closely veiled, stood near the ladies' entrance, shivering under her wrappings in the chill morning blast. In one instant, Lieutenant Shirley had sprung out; in another, he had assisted her in, and taken the reins himself; and the next, he was riding away with breakneck speed, with his face to the rising sun.

CHAPTER II.

MOTHER AND SON.

A BROAD morning sunbeam, stealing in through satin curtains, fell on Brussels carpet, on rosewood furniture, pretty pictures, easy-chairs and ottomans, and on a round table, bright with damask, and silver, and china, standing in the middle of the handsome parlor. The table was set for breakfast, and the coffee, and the rolls, and the toast, and the cold tongue, were ready and waiting; but no one was in the room, save a spruce waiter, in a white jacket and apron, who arranged the eggs, and tongue, and toast artistically, and set up two chairs *vis-à-vis*, previous to taking his departure.

As he turned to go, the door opened, and a lady entered—a lady tall and graceful, proud and handsome, with her fair hair combed back from her high-bred face, and adorned with the prettiest little trifle of a morning-cap, all black lace and ribbons. She wore a white cashmere morning-dress, with a little lace collar and a ruby brooch, and Lady Agnes Shirley managed to look in this simple toilet as stately and haughty as a dowager-duchess. Her large light-blue eyes wandered round the room, and rested on the obsequious young gentleman in the white jacket and apron.

"Has my son not arrived, yet?" she said, in a voice that precisely suited her face—sweet, and cold, and clear.

"No, my lady; shall I—"

"You will go down-stairs; and when he comes, you will ask him to step up here directly."

There was a quick, decided rap at the door. Agnes turned from the window, to which she had walked, as the waiter opened it, and admitted Lieutenant Cliffe Shirley.

"My dearest mother!"

"My dear boy!" And the proud, cold eyes lit up with loving pride as he kissed her. "I thought I was never destined to see you again."

"Let me see. It is just two months since I left Clifton-lea—a frightful length of time, truly."

"My dear Cliffe, those two months were like two years to me!"

Lieutenant Cliffe, standing hat in hand, with the morning sunshine falling on his laughing face, made her a courtly bow.

"Ten thousand thanks for the compliment, mother mine. And was it to hint up your scapergrace son that you journeyed all the way to London?"

"Yes!" She said it so gravely that the smile died away on his lips, as she moved in her graceful way across to the table. "Have you had breakfast? But of course you have not; so sit down there, and I will pour out your coffee as if you were at home."

The young man sat down opposite her, took his napkin from its ring, and spread it with most delicate precision on his knees. There was a resemblance between mother and son, though by no means a striking one. They had the same blonde hair, large blue eyes, and fair complexion—the same physical Saxon type;

for the boast of the Clifffes was, that not one drop of Celtic or Norman blood ran in their veins—it was a pure, unadulterated Saxon stream, to be traced back to days long before the Conqueror entered England. But Lady Agnes' haughty pride and grand manner were entirely wanting in the laughing eyes and gay smile of her only son and heir, Cliffe.

"When did you come?" he asked, as he took his cup from her ladyship's hand.

"Yesterday—did not my note tell you?"

"True! I forgot. How long do you remain?"

Lady Agnes buttered her roll with a grave face.

"That depends!" she quietly said.

"On what?"

"On you, my dear boy."

"Oh! in that case," said the lieutenant, with his bright smile, "you will certainly remain until the end of the London season. Does Charlotte return the same time you do?"

"Who told you Charlotte was here at all?" said Lady Agnes, looking at him intently.

"I saw her with you last night at the theater, and little Leicester, too!"

"Were you in the box with Sir Roland and the other two gentlemen, last night?"

"Yes. Don't look so shocked, my dear mother! How was I to get through all that crowd to your box? and besides, I was engaged to Sir Roland for a supper at his rooms; we left before the ballet. By the way, I wonder you were not too much fatigued with your journey, both of you, to think of the theater."

"I was fatigued," said Lady Agnes, as she slowly stirred her coffee with one pearl-white hand, and gazed intently at her son; "but I was solely to see that actress—what do you call her? Vivian, or something of that sort, is it not?"

"Mademoiselle Vivian is her name," said the young man, blushing suddenly, probably because at that moment he took a sip of coffee, cooling him.

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"Stories about me! Haven't the first idea. What are they?"

"Don't equivocate, sir! Do you know what has brought me up to town in such haste?"

"You told me a few moments back, if my memory serves me, that it was to see me."

"Exactly! and to make you give me a final answer on a subject we have often discussed before."

"And what may that be, pray?"

"Matrimony!" said Lady Agnes, in her quiet, decided way.

Lieutenant Shirley, with his eyes fixed intently on his plate, began cutting a slice of toast thereon into minute squares, with as much precision as he had used in spreading his napkin.

"Ah, just so! A very pleasant subject, if you and I could only take the same view of it, which we don't. Do you want to have a daughter-in-law to quarrel with at Castle Cliffe? I want you to be serious this morning, and talk sense."

"But it's a fact, upon my honor! Cliffe did nothing but rave about you all the evening, and protested you were the prettiest woman in the house."

"Bah! Tell me about yourself, Cliffe—what have you yet been doing for the last two months?"

"Oh! millions of things! Been on parade, fought like a hero in the sham fights in the Park, covered myself with glory in the reviews, made love, got into debt, went to the opera, and—"

"To the theater!" put in Lady Agnes, coolly.

"Certainly, to the theater! I could as soon exist without my dinner as without that!"

"Precisely so! I don't object to theaters in the least," said Lady Agnes, transfixing him with her cold blue eyes, "but when it comes to actresses, it is going a little too far. Cliffe, what are those stories that people are whispering about you, and that the birds of the air have borne even to Clifton-lea?"

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THE WANDERER TO HIS BRIDE.

BY L. C. GREENWOOD.

Wherever I roam by land or by sea,
And idle hours give peace to my soul,
Thoughts of a loved one with sweet ecstasy
Come waiting their influence o'er and o'er.
And out of those thoughts comes an image fair,
While fauliful dreams picture thee there.

However distant from thee I may roam,
Mid scenes that change with the varied lands;

Where the mountains are purple in even's glow,
Where the shores are sprinkled with golden sands,
And the white sails gleam of anchored ships,
I still feel one farewell kiss on my lips.

Whenever I long the shore to behold—
That holds the idol my heart has enshrined—
My arms, this moment should shielding enfold,
And lips should be whispering in love's language kind.

The passionate yearning that springs from my heart
Is an assurance how much loved thou art.

When bell's chimed soft in the church tower at night,
And their solemn sound floats on the air,
My hands I fold like a penitent wight,
And whisper to thee, for I am in prayer.

The stillness of the night sooths in my breast,
The longing for thee, and brings me sweet rest.

Oh, the dream of sweet love in holly guise
Haunts me wherever earth's my roome,
And where'er I go, my heart's mine eyes
My spirit seeks thine, though distant thy home,
Be patient, my love, with thee I'll be soon!

Overland Kit:

THE IDYL OF WHITE PINE.

BY ALBERT W. AIKEN,
AUTHOR OF "WITCHES OF NEW YORK," "WOLF DEMON," "WHITE WITCH," ETC.

CHAPTER XVI.

PATRICK GWYNE APPEARS.

A LOW cry of alarm came from Bernice's lips as she beheld the masked man standing within her room.

"Don't fear; I ain't a-goin' to harm you," said the outlaw, gruffly, his voice hard and unnatural.

Bernice made a single step toward him as the tone of his voice fell upon her ears. Her lips were parted as though a question trembled upon them, and there was an eager and an anxious look upon her beautiful face.

The road-agent guessed the question that was on Bernice's tongue.

"You know me, eh?" he said, with a hoarse chuckle.

"I—think I do," the girl replied, slowly, a puzzled expression upon her face.

"Oh! you know me, fast enough, and I know you, too, Bernice Gwyne. I knew you the moment I set my eyes on you in the coach the other night, although it's ten years since I've seen your face."

"Ten years!" said Bernice, very slowly, speaking as if she were in a dream, and her eyes fixed steadily upon the outlaw.

"Yes, it's ten years since I 'levanted' from old Gotham and found a home in the Far West. I've changed a heap since that time; the smooth-faced boy has become the bearded man; the hand, that once only struck in self-defense, is now raised against all."

"And who are you?" cried Bernice, suddenly, the girl standing rigid as a statue, and staring with straining eyes upon her strange visitor.

"What do you ask that question for, when you must know who I am?" demanded the outlaw, coarsely.

"Answer it, please," replied Bernice, quietly, but with a suppressed agitation in her face that was painful to behold.

"You know well enough. What man is there in this hyer ranche likely to call you on, like I did, when I put my head in at the coach window? Who is it that you've come all the way from the East to find, eh?" the outlaw asked.

"Patrick Gwyne," she replied.

"Take a good look at me; I'm the man," said the road-agent.

"You, Patrick Gwyne?" Bernice questioned, slowly.

"Yes, you know I am; when you look upon me and hear my voice, you know that I am Patrick Gwyne, although you have tried to cheat yourself into a belief that you have discovered Patrick Gwyne in this blackleg, Dick Talbot."

"How do you know that?" demanded Bernice, quickly.

"Because I overheard all that passed between you and him up in the ravine to-day," replied the outlaw, with a laugh.

Bernice started as though she had been bitten by a serpent.

"It's traps," added Kit, noticing the movement of the girl. "I was snugged down among the pines; you see, I have to be pretty careful how I walk round this hyer town. You happened to meet this fellow not ten paces from my hiding-place, so I heard all that passed between you. I could hear though I couldn't see, but for all that, I saw something, without the use of my eyes, that he didn't see with the use of his."

"And what was that?" asked Bernice, a peculiar expression upon her face.

"That Bernice Gwyne, if she stays in Spur City long, will be very apt to make a fool of herself," replied Kit, bluntly.

"You think so?"

"I know so," he said, decidedly. "Why, Bernice, I know you of old. The free and open-hearted child has not changed, although she has grown to womanhood; her nature is still the same. But, you're on the wrong track, my girl; switch off; say good-bye to this region and get back East as fast as possible."

"And leave you, Patrick Gwyne, to lead this life?" questioned Bernice.

"What other is open to me?" said Kit, doggedly.

"The life of an honest man; you are young yet; the best years of your life are still before you!" exclaimed Bernice, earnestly.

"Too late!" said the outlaw, with a shake of the head.

"It is never too late to forsake the ways of evil!" replied the girl.

"Oh, there's no use talking; leave me alone; you can't help me any. Go East and forget that such a man as Patrick Gwyne ever existed!" he exclaimed.

"Patrick, do you know what has happened at home?" she asked, quietly, but with a world of feeling in her tone.

"Yes."

"All?"

"Yes; the father forgot that he had a son; well; the son once forgot that he had a father; both are even. Perhaps if the father had been more of an Irishman and less Roman, the son would not have disgraced his gray hairs."

"How can you speak so, Patrick?" exclaimed Bernice, softly, her large eyes filling with tears.

"It is the truth," the outlaw replied, stubbornly. "My father had read that the Roman, Brutus, gave his son to death; his country first, his kindred after; my father aped the Roman and would have given me to the scaffold had I not found safety in flight. Years came and went, yet he did not relent; the foolish boy, that a kind word perhaps might have saved from evil, became a desperate man. When my father was on his deathbed, even, he did not relent."

"How do you know?" asked Bernice.

"I guessed it," said Kit, with a faint smile.

"You did not guess rightly," Bernice said, softly. "Your father's illness lasted only a few hours; the shock came so sudden that it gave him no time to undo the wrong that he had committed in his will; but yet, the last word upon his lips was your name; in his dying hour he thought of the son whose name he had forbidden all to speak."

The teeth of the outlaw were tightly compressed, and his muscular frame shook with strong emotion.

"Will you not then leave this dreadful life and seek once more the path of honesty?" Bernice asked, eagerly.

For a moment the road-agent did not reply; then, with a great effort, he recovered his composure.

"Enough of that," he said. "I have already given you my answer, and now give me yours. Will you leave this place and return to the East?"

"No," said Bernice.

"You will not!" exclaimed Kit, harshly.

"No," replied Bernice, firmly.

"And why will you not?" demanded the outlaw, evidently annoyed. "You have found what you seek. I am Patrick Gwyne. You do not doubt that, do you?"

"No," Bernice replied.

"You came to the West to find me; you have found me. That ends your mission. What can keep you here?"

"Can't you guess?"

"No."

"And yet you say that you overheard the interview between myself and this Mr. Talbot, to-day?"

"So I did, every word; if you doubt it, I'll repeat the conversation."

"No, I do not doubt it," Bernice replied.

"You also said that you, without eyes, discovered something which escaped his vision."

"Yes, I did."

"And you ask why I remain here?"

Kit looked at the girl for a moment in silence; wonder expressed itself in his dark eyes.

"You love this man?" he cried suddenly.

"I do," Bernice replied, firmly and proudly.

"Girl, you are mad!" cried the road-agent, roughly.

"Do you think so because I love this man, who calls himself Talbot, and because I am not ashamed to confess to you, my cousin, Patrick Gwyne, that I do love him?" the girl, the peculiar look again appearing on her face.

"You love this fellow, this Injin Dick, bally, gambler, cheat of the first water! A scoundrel that the Vigilantes will string up to the branch of a tall pine some fine morning as a warning to the rest of his cut-throat tribe!" cried Kit, hastily, and with bitter indignation.

"Yes, I love him," replied Bernice, proudly, "and that love shall win him from the mire of evil and make an honest man of him once again." As she spoke, the color flushed her cheeks and a bright, joyous light sparkled in her eyes.

"Oh, you know me, fast enough, and I know you, too, Bernice Gwyne. I knew you the moment I set my eyes on you in the coach the other night, although it's ten years since I've seen your face."

"Ten years!" said Bernice, very slowly, speaking as if she were in a dream, and her eyes fixed steadily upon the outlaw.

"Yes, it's ten years since I 'levanted' from old Gotham and found a home in the Far West. I've changed a heap since that time; the smooth-faced boy has become the bearded man; the hand, that once only struck in self-defense, is now raised against all."

"And who are you?" cried Bernice, suddenly, the girl standing rigid as a statue, and staring with straining eyes upon her strange visitor.

"What do you ask that question for, when you must know who I am?" demanded the outlaw, coarsely.

"Answer it, please," replied Bernice, quietly, but with a suppressed agitation in her face that was painful to behold.

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ONE OF MRS. MAY AGNES FLEMING'S Most Splendid Productions

is commenced in this issue of the SATURDAY JOURNAL, and the reader will find in

VICTORIA;

OR

The Heiress of Castle Cliffe.

with what art and power Mrs. Fleming writes when she is at her best. Undoubtedly this is one of the finest serial stories which has been given to the press in a long time, and it will be received with great interest and attention.

The Arm-Chair.

In Houssaye's "Confidences," from which we quoted in our last, we find this paragraph, regarding a reception and ball given on a late March evening—in Paris, of course: "I saw last night, at Madame Harcourt's ball, the New World and the Old—Paris and New York—disputing the fashionable supremacy by dressed as brilliant as sheet-lighting. It was like fairy-land, all those pretty women in that charming hotel in the Champs Elysées all abloom with camellias, tulips, and primroses. It was the first smile of springtime, and the last hour of the Carnival."

Paris and New York. That's what is the matter. "Paris in New York" is "all the rage. It is goods and gewgaws with Parisian names; and not to know how to chatter French is becoming an indelible sign of plebeianism. It is French this and French that, until it seems that anything American is not worth the notice.

From a kid glove to a bridal *trousseau*—from a cake of soap to a carriage—from a bun to a five-course feast—it is all French. The way over to Paris has become such a highway that thousands now travel it yearly merely to do their shopping and eating.

The money Americans spend on Paris yearly is enough to sink a ship, and the only wonder is that we consent to live here at all. We are reconciled by substitutes. A new French "hat" goes a great ways toward making life endurable, while French carpets, furniture and hangings are such a comfort that we endure our plebeianism and domestic associations with something like resignation. Not to have French plate-glass in your windows, French mirrors on your walls of plaster of Paris, French carpets on your floors—why, you are to be pitied and shunned; you can not expect the "respectability" to call upon you.

Even the maids in our kitchens sport their French kid gloves, French gaiters, French flowerers and French dresses. We hear, indeed, that they propose to strike for higher wages, upon the plea of doing French cooking. And pray, why shouldn't they, since what is French even in name is worth ever so much more than what is American?

The question is, as Grace Liston says—how much further can we go in this devotion to the merely extrinsic and extraneous? Is it not about time to take an account of stock and see just where we stand? Are not a little self-assertion and a good deal of self-respect virtues that will bear exaltation? To continue this subversivity to a foreign nation must render us contemptible in the estimation of those having sense enough to see servility in its true

Sunshine Papers.

Books.

The Preacher said, "Of making many books there is no end;" and that was so many years ago that mankind's knowledge of the wise divine and his words is confined to the record of them.

What would the poor gentleman say, in this nineteenth century, if he could revisit earth and behold the hundreds of thousands of people employed in some connection with this making many books, of which, indeed, in our age, there is no end? What would he have thought of the machines for stamping men's thoughts upon pages with the velocity of lightning? What of the piles of papers, magazines, and books, in homes alike of the rich and poor; of the great public libraries; of the stores confined to that branch of trade; of the stalls along the streets; and the subscription-book solicitors at the doors; and the thriving business against the railings at the ferries; and the man rushing through the cars with the last popular novels? What word of censure would he have pronounced upon the literary thieves who make name and fortune by pilfering the thoughts of others; what assurance of sympathy have given to the reviewer forced to scan, perpetually, new books, good, bad and indifferent?

As the Preacher's astonishment and remarks must remain a matter of speculation, suppose we return to that same reviewer? How often have I pitied him; how often shuddered for the authors he so mercilessly dissects; and wondered, when I read some glowing eulogy, how much richer he was in pocket that day!

A disgraceful intimation? So I think; but a true one, nevertheless; and it goes to prove that we cannot always depend upon the reviewers for correct advice as to what books we should read. Every one ought to read a little; peruse some books. There are few homes so poverty-stricken that an interesting volume may not be added to its possessions occasionally; no person so much an "east as not to find accessibility to the realms of life."

Put reading in the way of children; not so plentifully and rapidly as to pall their taste for it; but judiciously. See that they have vivacious, amusing, instructive books, and fresh, captivating magazines; but keep from them papers and books filled with tales of crime and redundant with the impossible adventures of youths who are painted as heroes

because of their wicked daring, and in whose lives sin is made glorious. Keep from them, equally religiously, the books wherein children are made too good to live, too unreal ever to have lived, and are presented, altogether, through a pious halo unhealthy, distorted, and unnatural. Well do I remember crying bitterly while my mother read to me an absurd memoir of a child so utterly unchildish that she ought never to have existed, if she ever did; and, being questioned of my grief, begged:

"If you please, I don't want to hear that book. I know the little girl is going to die, she is so dreadfully good."

And I have always felt profound respect for the little girl who confessed to committing a wrong deed, remarking, "I don't want to be good, mamma, 'cause if I am, I'll die." Give the little ones books about girls and boys as human as themselves, and do not be afraid of the fairy tales.

Every home should be supplied with a choice of reading which will please alike youths and maidens, the middle-aged and the old, the grave and the gay.

"Dreams, books, are each a world, and books, we know, are a substantial world, both pure and good."

Let those who would cultivate sensibility have access to the pages of Mackenzie and Goethe; and those who need good sense concerning common matters of life find Franklin at their disposal. If the youth dreams of a political future, put Webster, and Calhoun, and Montesquieu, and Nordhoff in his way, and give him the life of Washington and Demosthenes to read. For the grave souled, who delight to tutor their reasoning powers, have Bacon, and Chillingworth, and Butler, and Locke; and for those who revel in classical literature, Steele, and Coleridge, and Carlyle, and Lamb, and Addison; or history, Hume, Bancroft, Gibbon, Kingsley, Froude, and Macaulay. Do not be chary of such grand imaginative literature as may be found within the pages of Milton and Shakespeare, nor exclude from your library such writings as have emanated from the pens of Emerson, E. E. Hale, Jean Paul Richter, Ruskin, Lamartine, Bayard Taylor, and Irving. And the poets, Moore, and Browning, and Pope, and Wordsworth, Goldsmith, Tennyson, Robert Browning, Holland, Whittier, Bryant, Byron, Longfellow, Ingelow, give them all a place.

And, lastly, but by no means leastly, have generous shelves filled with the works of the novelist. For we cannot all be statesmen and students; but through the pages of the novel the veriest outcast can move a principal figure in the politics and history of past and present; the toiling work-girl can get restful insights into the realms of taste and luxury. The novelist familiarizes readers of every condition with other countries, and minds, and classes, than their own; teaches bits of philosophy, mere animal needs and existence, inspires feelings of justice, and moves the masses to correct appreciation of great abuses and so induces reform. To those who lift us out of ourselves and beyond the carking of daily cares, give generous welcome. There is no purer, healthier literature for young or old than that furnished by Scott, Hawthorne, Thackeray, Trollope, Dickens, Hugo and Eliot; nor can the ladies and lasses find any harmful sentiments in the works of Grade Aguilar, Mrs. Oiphant, Mrs. Charles, H. B. Stowe, Mrs. Whittney, Miss Warner, the Brontes, Marion Harland, J. F. Cooper, J. S. C. Abbott, Hans Christian Andersen, Miss Muloch and J. T. Trowbridge.

Copper says: "Books are not seldom talismans and spells," and we are forced to believe that many a one is a spell for evil. It would be absurd, however, because of the sea of books everywhere flooding the world, some are dangerous, to put a ban upon all. "As good as kill a man as kill a good book; who kills a man kills a reasonable creature, God's image; but he who destroys a good book kills reason itself." And yet Bacon has well said: "Some books are to be tasted, others to be swallowed, and some few to be chewed and digested."

Young men and women should always have some book wherewith to fill up the odd moments that will occur daily in every life, be it ever so busy. Think! If only ten, fifteen or twenty minutes a day are spent in reading something instructive, how many hours the aggregate will show at the end of a year, or five years, and how much knowledge you will have gained. In hours of travel, during little delays, evenings, and perhaps an hour snatched in the long summer mornings, how many excellent books you can make yourself acquainted with; but be sure they are books worth the knowing; books that have amused, entertained, instructed, but have left no doubtful impressions upon the mind; books you will never wish you could efface from your memory. Perhaps I can give no better criterion for judging books, nor end my essay more practically, than by quoting Southey upon the influence of literature: "Would you know whether the tendency of a book is good or evil, examine in what state of mind you lay it down. Has it induced you to suspect that what you have considered unlawful and dangerous, after all, be innocent and harmless? Has it tended to make you impatient under control, and disposed you to relax in self-government? Has it addressed itself to your pride, your vanity, your selfishness, or any other of your evil propensities? Has it defiled the imagination or shocked the heart? Has it disturbed the sense of right and wrong which the Creator has implanted in the human soul? If so—if you are conscious of all or any of these effects—or, if having escaped from all, you have felt that such were the effects it was intended to produce, throw the book into the fire."

A PARSON'S DAUGHTER.

DON'T CROWL.

It is decidedly wrong, my good friend, to give up in despair and sit down in a despondent state, when matters do not eventuate as you want them to. How on earth is it going to mend the affair or make your burden of life easier to carry?

Because you are disappointed in business, love or pleasure, is that any reason you should say you haven't a friend in the world, that no one cares for you, that the world is only encumbered by your presence, and the sooner you and the world are done with each other the better?

It may all be very romantic and exceedingly poetical to talk of suicide and state that your body will be found floating in the cold water, but it is extremely wicked and deserves a harder scolding than I am capable of giving. I once heard a great, strong and healthy young man give utterance to just such expressions. I could not see how he was going to be better himself by shuffling off this mortal coil, and I just up and told him so. I read him a lesson and impressed on his mind about there being a Hereafter. The foolish

fellow argued that he would run the risk of a Hereafter, as it couldn't treat him any worse than the present had. Now, I am not much given to sentiment, and how I happened to give utterance to the words that follow I cannot say, but I know I did remark: "If you do not want to live for yourself, then live for those who love you."

The ridiculous fellow replied that there wasn't one soul who did love him! I couldn't swallow that, because I believe the vilest creature on earth has some one who will or who loves him. I'm sure Nero was about as bad a scoundrel as ever lived and was despised by almost every one, and yet we read that some one loved him enough to strew flowers on his grave!

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I don't wonder we often lose our friends; we grumble them away from us; we pour our real and imaginary troubles into their ears until they grow perfectly sick in hearing them. Grumbling is not a pleasant style of discourse to listen to.

We have a great many blighted beings in this world, individuals that all are conspiring against, according to their own imaginations, and the way they brag of their blightedness would lead one to seriously imagine they enjoyed it. A great deal of this "blight" arises from indigestion!

Of course we all have our troubles, cares and disappointments, but we cannot cure them by growling, and we can make them less grievous by bearing them patiently and resignedly. There is always some one who has a darker lot than ours, whose cross is far heavier to bear; so, instead of bemoaning our own hard lot, we had best try to cheer up others.

We mustn't murmur unnecessarily; we are not placed upon this earth for any such purpose. If the sun does go behind a cloud, it is going to emerge from it again, and we cannot keep it from doing so with fretting, fussing and fuming.

Somewhere or other, there are many individuals who dwell on this sphere of ours whom nothing can please, strive as we may, until we give up striving from sheer disgust, and then these carpers groan and cry that they "have no one to comfort them." Do they deserve our comfort? Of course they don't, and we are not one whit to blame for withholding it from them.

Then away with long faces, doleful looks and "solemnholly" countenances, and let cheerfulness and good nature reign in their stead. 'Twill make the world better and brighter; the days will not seem so long nor the hours so dull. It will be bright, gladsome summer all the year round, and we'll make friends of all a place.

Bury your cares in the ground; don't dig them up and don't go near them to look at them. Be content with what you have, and sigh not for the unattainable. Lock the door on trouble, snap your fingers at the "millions," be content to wait until your time comes to die and don't even contemplate suicide, and "never trouble trouble till trouble troubles you."

EVE LAWLESS.

Foolscap Papers.

Concerning the Ancient Egyptians.

The ancient Egyptians lived three thousand years ago. I'd hate to live three thousand years back. They thought they lived in modern times, but they didn't know any better, it seems. Let us all feel sorry for them.

I have never met any of those old settlers except in a dried state. They are dry old codgers, and very much wrapped up to themselves, and sorely need a change of linen.

I lately bought a venerable resident of Egypt three thousand years ago, and put him to soak. I was surprised to see him revive and open his eyes, and he began to talk in the Egyptian tongue, of which I know nothing, but which I took down in exceedingly short-hand, and reduced to broken English by the simple reduction of fractions.

He gave me a full account of the habits of his people, which are so little known at the present day. These are reliable because I wrote them myself.

They always threw themselves across the back of a chair when they went to sleep, or else slept under the bed, and used to try to see which could snore the loudest.

They rose up in the morning and took breakfast—before they awoke. They argued that a breakfast eaten while asleep went further than when awake, and that it was rather delightful to eat breakfast before waking, as we moderns are perfectly well aware of.

They never rode a horse they sat backwards, and never frightened at any danger that might have been ahead; and on being thrown they always strove to light on their feet.

They always climbed up to the forks of a tree to pull off their boots, and blew their noses with a pair of bellows.

They walked pigeon-toed, with their heels to the front; or when he wanted to ride an Egyptian would take himself up under his arm and carry himself off, or get into a wheelbarrow and wheel himself anywhere he wanted to go.

If an Egyptian was very hungry he would hire some one to help him eat his dinner.

From notions of economy they wore both in one boot to save the other, especially if they were going a great distance.

They always ran when they walked to get there sooner.

Every time an Egyptian told a lie he would immediately tell a truth to balance it, and thus make all right and fair.

Whenever they found a hole in a stocking they clipped it out with a pair of scissor, or burnt it out.

They always found out the time of day by inquiring of their neighbors.

In cold weather they always wore umbrellas to keep warm.

An Egyptian always considered his wife as one of the family, and took every occasion to tell his mother-in-law that she was another.

Men were not allowed to marry until their wives could afford to keep a husband.

Their notes were always drawn payable at sight, and so it took a good while for them to see it.

When one would have his head taken off by a circular saw he always got along without it the best way he could, and said nothing about it to his most intimate friends.

They always sleigh-rided in a carriage and carriage-rided in a sleigh; they were accustomed to it and seemed to think it was all right.

If an Egyptian died and never survived it, thus becoming extinct, and I might say deceased, departing this life, as it were, and considered dead, they salted him down, canvased him, and then smoked him in a smoke-house. By this means he was cured—of all the ills that flesh is nephew to.

The agricultural portion of the people lived by farming.

Their first instinct was to deal honestly with everybody—their second wasn't—and they generally stuck to second thoughts.

They always washed their faces with a dry towel, and combed their hair with a splinter, and always kept their teeth white with a daily coat of whitewash.

They hitched the horse at the rear end of the cart invariably, and a footman going any distance always got permission to walk behind a wagon, or get some other fellow to help him walk the distance, and then the other would often get the biggest half of the walk put on him.

An Egyptian took very little along with him when he died, only a small bundle containing a change of clothes; no real estate, or anything else; such were the laws of the country and as beef.

They were abstemious in their habits, and never ate any more than they wanted, unless they were invited out to dinner, and they never drank more than what they wanted, unless what they wanted was less than what they drank.

They lived on Egyptian soil and any vitchens they could get.

It is somewhat remarkable that they never had any grandmothers.

The Egyptians usually died shortly after their last breath, or a few minutes before, just as they took a notion to.

After imparting this information the old mummy dried up and became mumm without a mumble.

WASHINGTON WHITEHORN.

Readers and Contributors.

To CORRESPONDENTS AND AUTHORS.—No MSS. received that are not fully prepaid in

MONDAY.

BY EBEN E. REXFORD

The robin carols wild with glee
The happy measures of his song,
To see again up the lea
The blossoms he has missed so long.

The little bird courts far away,
Blends dimly with the tender sky,
And sunshine of this golden day
Drops benedictions from on high.

I wander down the sunny slope,
And think of him who talked with me
Of coming days, and thrilled with hope
When dreaming of the time to be.

I see the wind flower in the grass,
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To make his peace at last complete.

"Bonny Kathrina."

BY LUCILLE HOLLIS.

I CAME across a letter yesternight, yellow and faded and old, written me in the long ago by a friend; and it ran thus:

"You will remember the old building at whose entrance we found seats one summer night, I am reminded to mention this change also. It was torn down over a week ago. You can, perchance, imagine my feelings as I sat in that same room. For many is the time I have since wandered by that trysting-place, and dreamed the dream of the night over again. But never, nevermore shall you and I rest ourselves there, however propitious are the fates of our future lives. And only in dreams shall it stand for us as we knew it in the summer of 1863."

Ah, truly, never, nevermore, shall you and I seat ourselves in that old trysting-place, together, Vincent; for the grasses of eight summers have tossed their sprays lightly above your grave as dreamlessly you have slept in that quiet New England churchyard. But still, in memory, I see the quaint old stone house where we sat in the harvest moonlight. It was just over the crest of the hill on which nestles Alterbrand Hall, among its greenery of maples—beautiful, silent, deserted Alterbrand.

How often I have thought of your young hair as I saw him once in the summer of '60; that fatal summer of his life, three years before you and I spent one August-time, together, just within the shadows of the homestead from which his blithe presence was gone. I can see him yet; tall and slender as a young sapling, with brown waves of hair tossed back from his pale, earnest, classic face, and dark, thoughtful eyes looking so wistfully and innocently upon the world in which he hoped to do noble work. Rare grace of form, and beauty of face, and quiet, refined, reserved manners, had Clyde Alterbrand. No wonder the mother worshipped the boy whom death had alone spared her of all her treasures.

She is dead now. I read the notice a few months ago, copied from an Italian paper. If ever I see the white portals of Alterbrand again, gleaming adown the arch of interlacing maples, change will have come to it; strangers will have opened wide its closed windows, and filled with life its silent walls; and none will know of its once young master's last sweet dream there.

And that reminds me, Vincent, dreaming here over your long ago letter, of some pages from Clyde Alterbrand's life you read me under the shadows of the decaying rose-trellis, over against the Hall. You sealed the packet up that day and gave it me. I have it yet unopened, and that was almost twelve years ago. But if I break the seal, now, perhaps other hearts than mine will give tender remembrance to the heir of Alterbrand. I will.

Two ceaselessly rainy days, and then, late in the afternoon, the sun won victory over the leaden skies and shone gorgeously, transforming to gold the prisoned drops in the flower-cups and stealing luscious odors from the tempting sprays of berries. I was glad to see the warm yellow light once more and escape from indoors to the glittering garden. It was late when I came in and thrust my feet in slippers, and all *en deshabille*, sat down to the piano in the dusk-darkened parlor; visitors came rarely to Alterbrand since father and Minnie's death. A long time I sat, playing softly, the room getting full of sweet darkness, when the thud of quick footsteps came along the rain-wet walk and sprung upon the piazza to the opened windows.

"Clyde, my boy, are you in there?" called a voice that I recognized as Oscar Mead's. I went out to answer and meet him, and he put his hand upon my shoulder, forcing me toward the steps, saying: "Come along; some one to see you down at the lodge."

I urged him to consider my appearance; but he only laughed, and asked if I was afraid of my cousins Cad and Leslie Delmar. So I went with him down the avenue. At the gate stood two carriages, Cad in one; Leslie and a lady, a stranger, in the other. After I had greeted my cousins, the lady leaned toward me holding out her hand, and asking:

"Have you forgotten me, Mr. Alterbrand? Then I shall have to introduce myself. I am Kate Claibourne."

Kate Claibourne! I could scarcely realize it! Try as hard as we may, our mental eyes will only keep pace with our physical ones in remembering places and persons we have known. I had always thought of Kate as the wild little schoolgirl who used to queen it over us boys right royally, teasing us with her coquettish caprices. For Kate was a coquette in those days, and I one of her most humble adorers. How often I had kissed her cheeks to carnation and tangled her sunny hair. Was she a coquette yet and Leslie her favored knight? I wondered as I noted how eagerly he watched her. But no! Kate, the lovely woman, has outgrown her childlike imperfections! How flossy her brown hair was; and her eyes—like stars—they burned one's soul. That first night they read mine; as we parted she bent toward me saying, softly:

"You are greatly changed from the gay boy-Clyde, and I think I can fathom the cause of the transformation. It is the noble life-work you have chosen. God bless you, and make you a successful clergyman."

And then they drove away through the moonlight, and I went in to dream of the days when we had all been happy children together. The next morning I was talking to mother of the call, and it seemed to me she listened with unusual seriousness; I feared I had recalled sad memories of Minnie by talking of those whom Minnie had loved. But when I joined her later in the garden, where she was tending her flowers, she started me with some news.

"I have sent Miles over to Easterly, to invite Cad and Leslie, with their friend, and Mr. Mead, to spend a few days with us. I've been thinking that perhaps I have been selfish in my sorrow; and that we should be better for having the gloom of our home sun-ripped once more. I am sure that the dear ones will know, all the same, that I mourn for them unceasingly."

Dear mother!

Miles brought back an acceptance of the invitation. The next day, as I lay under the maples, looking out over the valley, and the white spire of the church where I was soon to be wed, I saw again up the lea the blossoms he has missed so long.

The little birds sing, far away,
Blend dimly with the tender sky,
And sunshine of this golden day
Drops benedictions from on high.

I wander down the sunny slope,
And think of him who talked with me
Of coming days, and thrilled with hope
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quiring careful manipulation still, and I should not suppose you would wish to lose it to me. I obeyed your instructions to hold no communication, because it seemed policy as well as that you wished it."

She was standing a little aside watching him steadily, and speaking unemotionally as himself.

"Have you heard that property lost during the war has been restored to my father?"

"It is no secret. The fact has been openly discussed through the whole neighborhood."

"I want to tell you the truth regarding it. It is only a barren waste, the plantation now; it was never much better than that; but papa has circulated a false report of its importance to further his own ends. You know how he has always hoped to gain some wealth and some position at last, and this means only new humiliation to me. The time has come now, Owen, when if you are willing to stand by me as I by you, I shall throw off this long oppression of my life. I will dare his anger and reproaches, anything gladly, to be openly acknowledged as your wife."

"You forget that you are not the only one interested in secrecy, Venetia. My future prospects depend upon it. It was your choice to keep our relations secret two years ago; it is mine now."

"Does that mean you have wholly ceased to care for me, Owen? You seem like it. Your prospect is the chance of employment here at Thornhurst, and few employers are influenced more by a man's relations than by his ability. If Colonel Vivian is an exception there are doubtless other opportunities for a willing seeker. Is it because you do not wish to acknowledge me, Owen, because you regret the bond uniting us?"

"Under the circumstances I do not wish it. You don't understand the affair; it is not probable you would if I took an hour to explain. You women are unreasonable creatures always. I have waited your time; you must be content to bide mine."

He was not returning her gaze; he was speaking sullenly; he was another man from the one she had loved and trusted thoroughly. She knew in that moment well as she knew afterward that it was his intention never to acknowledge her. She shrank for a second, all the color went suddenly out of her face, but there was hardly a change in her low voice.

"I understand; you will be glad to be rid of my presence here. I presume you know with the rest that we go South very soon. I did not expect this from you; I have not deserved it; but I would not sue fidelity from any man alive. This is your ring, the one with which you wedded me. Take it. When you cease to care for me it is time we part forever, as we do here and now."

The ring dropped into his passive hand; he saw her face for one moment as he saw it throughout his after life, still blanched, with great sorrowful eyes upon him; then she swept away and he was alone.

He was not wholly unmoved under his indifferent aspect; some remembrance of his old passion surged at seeing her bright and beautiful before him, but the selfishness which had ruled him all his life was predominant now.

"Better so," he thought, dropping the little gold circle into his vest-pocket. "I've only to keep rid of her suspicions for the time. If anything would tempt her to speak now it would be to save Nora; let it be too late for that and I am safe from her."

(To be continued—commenced in No. 262.)

RED ROB.
The Boy Road-Agent.
BY OLL COOMES,
AUTHOR OF "DAKOTA DAN," "BOWIE-KNIFE BEN," "OLD HURRICANE," "HAWKEYE HARRY," ETC., ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER XI.
THE ARENA OF DEATH

A MURMUR of excitement escaped the lips of those shrouded figures on the top of the walls, and they pressed nearer the edge of the arena.

The door through which the panther had been driven from its cage into the enclosure, was immediately closed behind the beast.

The panther landed in the arena in a crouching position. His mouth was covered with bloody foam which told that he had been maddened before he was turned out. His eyeballs burned with that deadly, greenish hue so peculiar to this species of animals. The creature's head turned from side to side as though it were studying its new situation. The light blinded it at first, but it soon became accustomed to this. Then it espied the tall, majestic form of Basil Walramond.

A quiver seemed to thrill through the beast's whole form; its nose fell between its paws and its tail began the slow, serpent-like movement which warned the old man that the worst was soon to come.

Basil Walramond knew now what was meant by the "tiger-pit;" and when he remembered that his captors had spoken in Spanish, he was satisfied they were Spanish outlaws from the South, whose hereditary and barbarous love for the sport of bull-fighting was being gratified by turning wild beasts loose with captives in the court of the ruined monastery—a cruel sport at which a red savage's heart would have revolted.

The eyes of Walramond and the panther met. The old man knew wherein lay his only power over the beast, and from the moment of its first appearance, he watched his opportunity to catch the creature's glance. And when their eyes met, the ferocious creature seemed awed by the subtle influence of the old man's unflinching gaze. Had the man and beast been alone, the conflict would have ended there in that battle of eyes; but the shrouded spectators witnessing what seemed to be the panther's fear, threw a stone and hit it. This broke the spell that held it motionless. With a low, purring sound and violent lashing of the tail, it gathered its strength and shot through the air toward the old man.

With the agility of the panther itself, Walramond sprang aside, and as the animal passed him, he dealt it a terrible blow upon the jaw that sent it rolling across the arena with a maddened scream.

A burst of applause from the lips of the spectators above echoed through the night.

The panther was soon upon its feet, and smarting under the blow it had received, and a shower of pebbles hurled on it from above, its ferocious anger was fully aroused; and it at once leaped forward toward its antagonist again. Walramond endeavored to elude it, as before, but he sprang the wrong way and the full weight of the beast came violently against him, and together they rolled to the earth in a deadly struggle.

That natural instinct which causes one to

throw up an arm or hand to protect the face from danger that cannot otherwise be averted, gave Basil Walramond some little advantage over his brute foe. The animal aimed to fasten its fangs in his face, but his left arm intervening, passed into the open jaws midway between the wrist and elbow. The limb itself was protected by three thicknesses of clothing, the outer one being of heavy buckskin. I said the limb was protected, but it was very little, for the sharp fangs of the beast cut through all thickness of clothing into the quivering flesh.

No word or groan escaped the lips of the old man, as, in rapid evolutions, he and his foe rolled to and fro across the space locked in a deadly embrace. With his right hand he attempted to beat the beast off, or break its terrible jaws; but each blow only seemed toadden the creature all the more.

Shouts of fiendish joy rang from above. Peals of demoniac laughter burst forth over the old man's fruitless efforts to vanquish his foes.

Silently, desperately Basil Walramond fought the panther. His fist rose and fell with awful violence upon the hairy demon—the demon tugged and tore at his arm. And all this time but one thought occupied the old man's mind. That knife; if he could only get a hold of that knife which some unseen hand had thrown into the "tiger-pit," he might win the battle. Toward the side where the weapon had fallen he exerted every nerve to turn the tide of conflict. Fierce and determined were his efforts directed by that same calm, deliberate mind. Around and around, and over and across the arena they whirled and struggled, until at length the desired spot was reached. Then he groped for the knife; he found it. Firmly he grasped it—fiercely he drove the blade into the panther's side.

He had fallen into a doze, when he heard a key inserted into the rusty lock and turned. The next moment the door swung open, and a man in a brigandine-looking suit—a rough-bearded face, and a girdle bristling with weapons, entered. He carried a dim, sputtering lamp, which he placed on the floor; then seated himself, with his back against the door, loosened a revolver, and assuming an attitude of ease, said:

"Youngster, I reckon as what you think us 'tarnal tuft set of felles here; but if ye do, it's because you don't know any thing 'bout us."

"I am satisfied in regard to your character," replied Asa, keeping his hands behind him, that the outlaw might not discover their freedom.

"Admittin' it all, wouldn't you like a chance for life?"

"I'm not a bit particular," responded the prisoner, determined to show no over-anxiety to jump at any compromise.

"But wouldn't you walk out of here if a few words, truthfully spoken, would open that door and strip off your bonds?"

"I would prefer the fresh air of heaven to this pest-hole, as any fool ought to know," Asa replied, anxious to know what the outlaw had to propose without committing himself.

"Young man, the captain sent me here to talk, not to quarrel. If you will make a clean breast of the object that brought you and your companions—especially that tall old man—into this valley, you'll be permitted to leave here alive."

"I haven't the least assurance that you will do as you say. However, we came into this country to prospect for gold. We came from Santa Fe. I never questioned my companions as to their past life, nor they me. It was none of my business what the past had been to them."

"I'm not willing to accept this story," said the outlaw.

"You can go to the deuce then," blurted Sheridan, contemptuously.

"You can save the life of that old man by revealing what it is believed you know of him," said the outlaw.

"I have told all I know. Even if I did know more, I'd be a fool to compromise myself with you. No, sir, I am not the coward to betray my comrades, even if there were anything to betray them in."

"Well," said the outlaw, rising to his feet, and taking up the lamp, "it's no use talkin' to you; the old man will have to die."

He turned and went out, closing and locking the door behind him.

Asa sunk back against the wall, his breast convulsed with the emotions of a new and terrible fear. He closed his eyes as if to shut out some horrible vision.

A slight noise arrested his attention. He bent his ear and listened. He could hear a faint sound like that which would be produced by something crawling upon the moldy floor. Of this there was no doubt; and a feeling akin to horror crept like an icy chill over him, when he discovered that the sound originated within his dungeon.

What was it—a serpent—some venomous reptile that had entered through a fissure in the wall? Was it some tool of the outlaws sent in by some secret way to assassinate him in his dark?

Asa asked himself these questions, then held his breath in horrible suspense and listened.

He can hear the thing coming closer and closer, like a serpent dragging along its slimy folds. He can now see two dim, glowing orbs of fire appear through the darkness before him. He sees them draw nearer and nearer. And now he feels a warm air strike upon his cold cheek, but it sends a chill through his whole form. It is the breath of some living creature—a hot breath. The next instant something clammy touches his face.

It was a human hand!

CHAPTER XIII.
ZELLA'S MISSIVE.

ASA SHERIDAN could bear the suspense no longer, and he spoke out:

"Who are you?—do you intend to murder me?"

"Sh! Golly, no, I don't," was the response, spoken in a low tone and the unmistakable accent of an African.

"Then what do you want here?"

"Want you, I guess," was the laconic reply.

"Who are you?"

"I'se, I is."

"I should think so; but Slyly who?"

"Humph! jings, I don't know. Guess I'se a little chunk cut out ob some dark night, for I'se as black as dis room."

"I understand," said Sheridan; "you are a nigger; but how did you get in here?"

"Popped in when de robber went out. Oh, I can creep everywhere just like a weasel, and I know ebbery nook and corner ob dis ole wolfen, I do, and—"

Slyly went something across the wall, and the blue flame of a match told what it was. In a moment the light flared out, then the dark touched the flame to the end of a tallow dip, in whose light Sheridan scanned his visitor.

He was a block out of the night, sure enough—black as ebony. He was bareheaded, and barefooted, and wore a suit which consisted of shirt and pants, that fitted his form almost as close as the sable hide. He was small, lithe and active as a cat. He could not have been over fifteen or sixteen years of age. His woolly hair was cut close to his head, and as he turned his great white eyes and double row of white, pearly teeth toward the prisoner, the latter could scarcely repress a smile at the serious-comical expression upon the dusky face of the boy, who peered up at him with a broad grin.

"Who told you to come here, Slyly?" Asa asked.

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CHAPTER XIV.
THE CLOUD.

THERE come to all of us, now and then, days that seem endless. We get up and sit down, and yawn, and snore wearily about, and the long dull hours drag their slow length along, each one a lifetime of dreariness in itself. It was one of those black-letter days to Eve, that first one in Black Monk's—she wandered through the grounds, sauntered in and out of the house; tried to read, and found it impossible; and all the time, unconsciously to herself, she was listening for the coming of some one, for a voice, for a step, as all of us poor creatures have listened at some period of our lives.

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CHAPTER XV.
THE CLOUD.

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CHAPTER XVI.
THE CLOUD.

—

CHAPTER XVII.
THE CLOUD.

—

"Dat'll tell you," the lad replied, handing him a slip of paper neatly folded.

Sheridan unfolded the missive, upon which was written, in a fine, delicate hand, these words:

"Stranger, you can trust the bearer of this note. He will guide you to point of safety. Obey his injunctions in every particular, and all will end well. I tried to prevent you from bringing judgment from the window of the 'judgment hall.' But you must not have seen me, or else you did not understand my signal. However, all may come out well.

ZELLA."

"Who is Zella?" asked Sheridan, when he had finished the friendly missive.

"Why, golly, she's Zella, dat's who," replied the lad, emphatically.

"Well, Zella—Zella who?" repeated Asa.

"Golly, but you know how to ax questions. Why, she's my missus, and de captin's daughter. She sent me here to git you outen dis place. Guess she's in Lub wid somebody not a thousand miles from here," and the darky rolled up his big white eyes in a knowing manner, at the same time giving the corner of his mouth a significant twitch.

"Well, who is the captain of whom you speak?"

"Ki-yi! but you's one ob dem to ax and ax questions. But I won't answer dat one. De young missus said to not tell you anything 'bout de folks round dese diggings. Oh, I tell ye, massa!" and the boy shook his head mysteriously, "dar some awful tings gwine to round here! But de missus told me not to hint a word to you, so I guess I won't."

"Is your mistress a young, unmarried woman?"

"Yes; and you jis' bet if she ain't de spunkiest purty girl in de whole world. Lor' bless me, massa, she's sweet as honey."

"She has blue eyes and dark-brown hair, hasn't she?"

"In course she habz. Whar you see dat girl now? Jis' tell me dat, will you?"

"No difference, Slyly, where I have seen her."

"Golly, but you's a queer chap; but de young missus told me to git you outen dis place, and I gwine to do it. I know ebbery thing 'bout dis ole place, and am to prove it to you. See dat, sat?"

"I would prefer the fresh air of heaven to this pest-hole, as any fool ought to know," Asa replied, anxious to know what the outlaw had to propose without committing himself.

"Young man, the captain sent me here to talk, not to quarrel. If you will make a clean breast of the object that brought you and your companions—especially that tall old man—into this valley, you'll be permitted to leave here alive."

"I am satisfied in regard to your character," replied Asa, keeping his hands behind him, that the outlaw might not discover their freedom.

"But wouldn't you walk out of here if a few words, truthfully spoken, would open that door and strip off your bonds?"

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he had another card to play yet—the game was not quite ended.

That night, a letter addressed to Lady Landsdowne was posted in the little post office of Monkswood. It was short, pithy, and anonymous.

"My Lady Landsdowne need be in no hurry home. His lordship is not at all lonely in her absence, as he has a younger and even prettier lady than the charming wife for company in the dim old castle. The young person is none other than Almira, of Hazelwood."

"Some mysterious reason has left the latter for the former residence. How long she is going to remain is also unknown—probably your ladyship may find out on your return—if both birds, in the mean time, do not take unto themselves wings, and fly away."

A FRIEND.

CHAPTER XXIII.

THE SILVER LINING.

How Eve passed that night she best knew. Lord Landsdowne did not, though he partly guessed, seeing the white face and sunken eyes across the breakfast-table next morning. Worse of all, Senor Mendez and her only remaining friend now came not, though the morning was wearing away; and she stood straining her eyes, half wild with impatience, watching for his arrival. Noon came, and brought him not: the sultry afternoon stole on, and still he was absent. Oh! was he, too, turning against her! Was he, too, forgetting and deserting her, like the rest of the world? No, surely this was he at last. A fly had entered the gate, and was driving rapidly up the avenue. Eve started forward to meet it. Alas for her hopes! it was a fly from the railway-station, and held only a lot of trunks and a lady—the sad, haughty, handsome face of a lady she had seen before, and instinctively distrusted. It was Lady Landsdowne returned. Eve drew back with a low bow, but recalled at the fierce bright glance she met from the lady's blue eyes—a glance that, had her looks been lightning, would have blasted her where she stood. The next moment she was gone, gathering up her silk skirt with her gloved fingers, as if she feared it might be contaminated by the slightest contact with the other.

"It never rains but it pours." Oh, trust of all true proverb! Eve stood and looked after her with a strained and bewildered air. What had she done now to incur that fiery glance? Long ago she had heard of the intense and unreasonable jealousy of Lady Landsdowne, but it never occurred to her now. "To the pure all things are pure." Eve thought of everything, but not of that; until at last roused, indignant and outraged, she turned into the house with a brightened color and flaming eye.

"I will leave this instant—I will stay no longer where I am not wanted!" Let Senor Mendez go. He has forsaken me, like all the rest; but I will lie down on the roadside and die before I stay to be treated like this!"

She ran up-stairs, and was crossing the hall on her way to the room she occupied, when, through the half-open door of the library, she heard a loud and passionate voice pronouncing her name. Instinctively she stopped—I think the best of us would, in her place—and listened. The library was the room in which the lord of Black Monk's spent nearly all his time, but he was not the speaker. This raised angry voice was a woman's—was my lady's.

"I tell you I will speak!" she was passionately crying out, "and I will not lower my voice. Let the shameless creature hear, if she likes; such vile wretches care little what is said to them. But you, my lord, the saint, the paragon—I have found you out at last, have I? This is the way you pass the time when I am absent! I wish Miss Eve Hazelwood joy of her conquest!"

"Lady Landsdowne," the calm, low voice of her husband said, "have you gone mad? For Heaven's sake lower your voice, or you will have every servant in the house at the door in five minutes!"

"Let them come!" cried the excited lady.

"I want nothing better than to expose the pair of you! You're the model husband, forsooth!

—so kind, so indulgent, so faithful—the admiration of all the weak-minded female fools I know! But I have found you out in time, and I shall turn that miserable girl from the door in five minutes, and expose her to the whole country."

Lord Landsdowne rose from his seat and crossed the room to close the door, when the sight of Eve, standing there like a stone, made him start back as if he had seen a ghost. He turned scarlet for the woman who could not blush for herself.

"Miss Hazelwood, you here! Good heavens! you must have heard all!"

"I have, my lord," Eve said, her voice sounding even to herself strange and far off, "and I am going. I thank you most sincerely for your kindness, but I wish I had been dead before I ever came here!"

Lady Landsdowne came to the door, her shawl hanging off her shoulders, her bonnet still on, her face distorted by the storm of malignant fury into which she had lashed herself.

"Yes, go, you wretched girl, before I order my servants to turn you out, but do not think your infamy is to be concealed. No, I will expose—"

"Peace, woman!" her husband thundered.

"Hold your poisonous tongue, or I will forget I am a man and—"

"Strike me!" screamed Lady Landsdowne, who seemed to be fairly beside herself. "I knew it would come to that. But I will expose you both, the whole county shall know of it; shall know I am a wronged, slandered, insulted wife!"

She finished with an hysterical peal of laughter that ended in a wild and noisy storm of tears. Eve fled horrified, and Lord Landsdowne rang the bell, rung a peal that brought half a dozen curious servants to the spot before him.

"Her ladyship is not well! Attend to her!" was his order, and then he too was gone. Not in search of Eve, though—he had not moral courage enough for that, but to lock himself in his own room for the rest of the day, out of the reach of his wife's serpent-tongue.

And Eve, bareheaded and unshawled, as she had fled from Hazelwood, was flying now from Black Monk's. She did not fly far, however; the gate opened before she reached it, and a tall gentleman entered, and with a cry of joy she looked up into the kind eyes and friendly face of Senor Mendez.

"What's your hurry, Eve?" he said, stopping her. "running away again, eh?"

"Oh, let me go! let me go!" she cried, passionately. "I shall die if I stop here!"

"Die, will you? You look like it, I must say! What has happened?"

"Oh, do not ask me—it is too dreadful to tell! Only take me away from here!"

"Directly! Has Lady Landsdowne returned?"

"Yes, yes, yes! Oh, she is ten times worse than Miss Forest!"

"Yes; I know she is! But what has she done to you? Oh, I see!" he exclaimed, his eyes firing and his face flushing. "Eve has turned you out!"

A passionate gesture was her answer—her voice was too choked to speak.

"My poor child! My poor persecuted little Eve!" he said, compassionately, "and what are you going to do now?"

She broke out into a wild cry—the wail of a half-broken heart.

"Oh, I don't know! I only want to lie down and die!"

A change came over Senor Mendez. He took both her hands in his, and looked brightly down in her face.

"Not yet, Eve! not yet! Not till you see the silver lining of all these clouds; as I promised you. You have been thinking hard of me, I know, for leaving you so long; but I could not help it. I have been up to London since, in search of another runaway—a friend of yours, Eve. It will all come right yet, believe me. Can you bear a shock, Eve?"

She looked at him in silent questioning; and met his reassuring smile.

"Eve, did you ever hear of Conway Hazelwood?"

"I have heard he was my father," she answered, her heart beginning to throb fast, "and that he was dead."

"Half true and half false! He is your father, and he is not dead! Eve, your father lives!"

"Oh, where?" she wildly cried, "where in all the world have I a father?"

He took off his sombrero and held open his arms.

"Here, Eve; here, beside you! When all the world forsakes you, it is time your father should come to the rescue. Yes, Eve; no longer the creole planter, no longer Senor Mendez, but Conway Hazelwood and your father!"

(To be continued—commenced in No. 257.)

False Faces!

THE MAN WITHOUT A NAME.

A MYSTERY OF THE GREAT METROPOLIS.

BY GEO. L. AIKEN,

AUTHOR OF "A LIVING LIE," "SNARED TO DEATH," "BERNAL CLYDE," "ELMA'S CAPTIVITY," "STELLA, A STAR."

CHAPTER XXVIII.

RAYMOND'S STORY.

FRANK RAY came to the house early the next morning. He was greatly surprised to hear what had taken place, and was very much excited over it.

They wondered over his agitation, but they were soon to know the cause of it.

"And so our friend Ossian was a woman?" he said.

"Doesn't it beat all?" answered Kate. "We never suspected her, not one of us."

This discussion took place in the parlor, and assembled there were Genni Bartyne, Etta, Kate, Chester Starkes, and Frank Ray.

The surgeon had just departed from his morning's visit to Almira, and had reported her to be in very favorable condition.

"This was a bold attempt on the part of the villains," said Ray, musingly. "They have left the city, and we have traced them beyond the Harlem River, but the clue is lost there. They have a hiding-place somewhere in Morrisania. They must have come from there last night. They have had spies watching this house, that's evident. You must be more careful, sir, and not give them another chance to fire a shot at you," he added, earnestly.

"I'll try not to," answered Bartyne.

"I shall have this house strictly watched every night while you remain here, though they will hardly venture here again, knowing that we will be on the watch for them."

"They may think they have succeeded in their murderous attempt."

"Not they; or, if they did, the newspapers would speedily apprise them to the contrary. I think, however, that I can capture them before they can trouble you again."

"Would this mask afford you any clue?" Ray looked at the mask, and the mysterious marks inside of it.

"There's nothing to lead to any thing in that," he said. "Such a mask can be purchased at any of the toy-shops, and the marks are merely the private ones of the retailer denoting its cost price. It was worn, probably, by the assassin to produce alarm, as such a hideous face, dimly seen through the darkness, might do; and it also served the purpose of a disguise. These scoundrels are of a very ingenious turn of mind, their devices are numerous. But I'll trap them yet. This very night I expect to surprise them in their retreat in Westchester county. I have got two comrades to aid me—two of the smartest on the force, and they are following up the tracks now. I have promised them a handsome reward if we are successful in five minutes!"

"Let them come!" cried the excited lady.

"I want nothing better than to expose the pair of you! You're the model husband, forsooth!"

—so kind, so indulgent, so faithful—the admiration of all the weak-minded female fools I know! But I have found you out in time, and I shall turn that miserable girl from the door in five minutes, and expose her to the whole country."

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"Yes; I know she is! But what has she done to you? Oh, I see!" he exclaimed, his eyes firing and his face flushing. "Eve has turned you out!"

sufficiently repay them for what they have done for me."

Almira opened her eyes.

"You have done so, Peter, over and above," she answered, feebly, but quite distinctly.

Ossian would never be worth what he is now if we had not met you. He's satisfied and so an I."

Bartyne smiled.

"Not asleep, Almira?" he said.

"No; I was kind of dozing when you came in, and the sound of your voice awoke me."

"You have slept well?"

"Yes; and I feel much stronger. I know I'm going to live now; when I thought I was dying I—"

She paused abruptly, and a scarlet flush swept over her pale face.

"You were as brave as could be, Almira," rejoined Bartyne, pretending not to understand her allusion.

She looked at him with a wistful curiosity.

"I don't exactly remember what I said then," she replied, slowly.

"Really, I can't say; there was so much confusion about us," he answered, evasively.

He saw that she was in doubt whether he had betrayed the secret of her love for him or not.

She breathed a sigh of relief at his answer, for it made her think that she had not.

"The detective, Mr. Ray, has been here to-day, and he has every hope of capturing these assassins."

"He's a brave young man," replied Almira, and she smiled in a manner that perplexed Bartyne.

"I think so, too," he responded.

"So much like his father!"

Bartyne stared at this.

"His father?" he exclaimed. "Do you know his father?"

"Oh, yes, very well."

"That's odd! You never said anything about it before! Where did you ever meet his father?"

"Down in Pennsylvania."

"In Pennsylvania? When?"

"It's going on nigh to thirteen years now. And this young man looks something as his father looked then; only I don't think the young man is as good-looking as his father was at his age; but then the boy has led a rough kind of life, and that may have spoiled him a little."

"He looks very much like his father here," Etta said, joining in the conversation. "I thought so the first time I ever saw him."

"Like me?" ejaculated Bartyne, surprisedly.

"Down in Pennsylvania."

LOVE AT LONG RANGE.

BY J. B. JOY, JR.

I'm sure that I had never seen a face so finely fair, in all my travels up and down; here, there or anywhere.

I dotted on her snowy brow as any man would do.

With absolute extravagance on a ten-dollar note.

Although the Johnny jump-ups didn't spring beneath her feet.

I thought that well they might, and it would only be to meet.

Earth wasn't good enough by half to be walked on by Rose.

And I would have been proud to have her walk upon my toes.

I used to like to go and sit upon her dearest step late.

And dream that she was by my side, and think that I was great.

Upon her gate I used to swing, which sore the hinges tried,

Imagining that that dear girl was on the other side.

I thought I would be happy if I was her errand-boy;

I thought were I her brother it would give me too much joy.

And oh, to be refused by her, in asking for her hand,

Would be far better than a yes from any in the land.

If that dear girl had frowned on me I would have blessed the shock.

It was a joy too sweet if she had hit me with a rose.

And oh, if she were only mine to share my fortune small!

This could not be, and so I'd bump my head against the wall.

She married Joggins, and him she led a miserable life;

She knocked him down with rolling-pins and filled his days with strife;

She brushed him off with broomsticks till divorce

She did not care;

And then I saw I'd been a fool but wasn't mad a bit.

LEAVES
From a Lawyer's Life.

BY A. GOULD PENN.

IV.—A Veteran Vanquished.

On the outskirts of our little city lived an old Frenchman, named Paul Varnier, who owned a neat cottage-house and a couple of acres of ground, which he cultivated as a vegetable garden. His vegetables were always first in market and in general demand, and the old man did a thriving business, and was supposed to have accumulated considerable money.

This Paul Varnier was an oddity. His constant boast was that of having been a grenadier under Napoleon, and he loved to talk of his many battles and marches, and would dwell pathetically on his love for the "Little Corporal."

Everything about his home was regulated with military precision, and frequently the old soldier might be seen marching back and forth in his garden, as if on guard, with his old saber in hand, saluting imaginary officers with the greatest gravity.

Pretty Heloise Dejaure, his granddaughter, was his sole companion and housekeeper. She had been taken by Paul when a mere child, she was left an orphan, and had grown to womanhood under his care, no expense being spared in her education and adornment. But Paul Varnier was terribly jealous of his beautiful charge, and kept lovers at a distance.

But Heloise had a mind of her own, and her preference was in favor of Jean Calot, a native of *la belle France*, and a rising young mechanic. They met clandestinely, and were obliged to exercise great caution and ingenuity to evade discovery by the wary old soldier.

And it so happened that one fine summer evening found the lovers enjoying a stolen interview in the garden.

"You will always love me thus, Jean?" asked the coy mademoiselle.

"Yes, Heloise; can you doubt me? But I have waited long and patiently for the time that I might claim you, and it seems as far distant now as ever. I have asked Paul Varnier for your hand, and you know how I was refused and even driven away."

"Yes, Jean, but I am sure grandfather will yet relent."

"But if he should not, Heloise?"

For answer she placed her hand in his, but was silent as she raised her beautiful dark eyes to his.

"Hush! some one comes. It is grandfather! Fly, Jean, fly!"

"Never!" resolutely responded Jean.

"Sacré! Mon Dieu!" and old Paul Varnier stood before the lovers with his saber glittering in the moonlight.

"Stop, Paul Varnier!" exclaimed Jean, boldly rising and facing the veteran. "Listen to what I have to say."

Fairly incensed with wrath, the old soldier flounched his saber, uttering a volley of epithets, and fiercely assailed the young man who was *per force* obliged to retreat hastily.

"Paul Varnier, you will regret this!" exclaimed the now excited Jean, as he leaped over the fence into the road.

Satisfied with having put Jean to flight, old Paul entered his house with Heloise, giving vent to his spleen in sputtering and scolding in broken French.

"What is the trouble, Jean Calot?" inquired Bob Holly, who, passing at that moment, heard Jean's muttered threats.

"The old grenadier attacked me with his sword," sulkily answered Jean, and hurried away.

And this was the prelude to a strange case, as I afterward learned it.

On the morning after these events, as I entered my office, I was greeted by a young man, named Lewis Ayres, who was a student under my supervision.

"Good morning, Mr. Smith," was Lewis' usual greeting on my appearance. "Have you heard the news?" he continued.

"No; what news, Ayres?"

"Why, this morning, as I came down-town, old Paul Varnier came rushing down-street, hatless and flourishing his old saber, saying he had been robbed last night of a considerable amount of money. He rushed to Squire Wright's office and had a warrant issued for the arrest of Jean Calot, and Jean is now in prison."

"Robbed—Jean Calot?" I exclaimed, for I knew Jean to be a young man of excellent reputation.

"Yes, and Jean has sent word that he wants to see you at once, sir."

Accordingly I hastened away to the prison, where I found the young man in a state of excitement over his arrest, and learned from his own lips the facts as I have related them.

By my advice Jean plead not guilty to the charge before the magistrate, and he was set at liberty, on bail, to await the action of the higher court, which convened in a few weeks thereafter.

I found that there was an array of circumstances against Jean Calot, pointing to him as the robber of old Paul's gold, and I could see but little chance for his acquittal, unless some

unforeseen evidence should appear in his favor.

The sentiments of the community were divided as to his guilt or innocence, and his previous good character had won for him many firm friends. He bore up bravely under the shame and suspicion, and never despaired of proving his innocence.

The day of trial came, and found me still unprepared to establish his entire innocence, and it was with feelings of chagrin and pity that I entered the crowded court-room that morning, and looked into his handsome, but pale face. I felt that he was doomed.

The work of calling and impaneling a jury was soon accomplished, and a statement of the case duly submitted by the attorneys, and now all was in readiness to proceed with the testimony.

A commotion and snickering among the spectators was caused by the entry of the prosecuting witness, old Paul Varnier. And well might their levity be excused.

Dressed in his old and faded uniform, with plumed hat, cuirass and bright, gleaming saber, old Paul marched proudly in as if on grand parade. Halting, with military precision, he faced about and gravely saluted the judge with his weapon at present, then sheathing it, he took his seat by the prosecuting attorney.

An audible snicker followed his maneuver, and even a nervous twitching about the lips of his honor was perceptible, but judicial dignity was maintained, and the examination began, Paul Varnier being the first witness called to the stand.

"Monsieur Varnier," began the prosecutor, politely, "state to the court and jury your place of birth, age, etc."

"Oui, monsieur. I have been born in *la belle France*; I have been your soldier. Ven I was in ze armee of Napoleon in Italee, in Zhamanee, at Austerlitz, at—"

"Stop, stop, monsieur!" and with great difficulty could he be kept within the bounds of proper testimony.

But by degrees the story was obtained, how he had, by careful industry and great economy, managed to accumulate a small sum of gold and silver, which he had placed in a chest in his bedroom. And he dwelt at length on the conduct of the prisoner on that night when his money was taken.

"How much gold and silver had you in that stocking?" was asked.

"Oui! deux—two hundred' dollaire. Une ver' foine medal Napoleon gif me at Marengo. Ah! monsieur—"

"Halt!" and at the word the ready tongue was silent, and the stiff, military air resumed.

Amid much merriment, caused by the anxiety of the old Frenchman to air his military renown, his story was obtained, but in it was no direct evidence against Jean Calot, and I began to have hopes.

Bob Holly was then called, and he testified to Jean's angry threat against old Paul, on the evening of his sudden exit from the garden, and described the manner and actions of the prisoner in such a way that left but little doubt of guilt.

In vain I cross-questioned. He knew but little, and that little was told with such simplicity and exactness that I could find no flaw in his testimony.

"Let Henderson Baker be called," said the prosecutor, with a triumphant glance at me.

"What is your occupation, Mr. Baker?"

"I am a jeweler and watchmaker, sir."

"Did you at any time sell any jewelry to the prisoner here?"

"Yes, sir, I did."

"Of what description, and at what time?"

"It was early in the morning after this robbery is said to have occurred. I was just opening my store, when the prisoner, Jean Calot, came in, and he purchased a small pair of gold earrings."

"Did he pay you for the earrings?"

"Yes, sir; he gave me a silver five-franc piece, and I returned him his change in silver."

"Do you often receive French coin in exchange for your wares?"

"Very rarely, sir. In fact so seldom that I have considered them as curiosities, and also frequently worked them into articles of jewelry."

"Have you the coin that Jean Calot gave you?"

"Here it is," producing a silver piece, which was duly proven to be one among those owned by Paul Varnier, and distinguished by a private mark he had put upon it.

This evidence was not without its effect on the jury, and I could see the cold, hard look in their eyes as they glanced at Jean Calot, who sat with downcast eyes and pallid cheeks.

A look of fiendish delight overspread the countenance of Paul Varnier, and his hand played with the handle of his old saber as though he would be rejoiced to draw it from its sheath and strike down the convicted criminal before him.

Yes, Jean Calot was undoubtedly guilty; and yet I could not bring my mind to believe it absolutely. But he was wrapped in a chain of evidence that left no room for doubt, and besides, he had nothing but silence with which to meet the accusations.

And so the testimony was closed, and the jury whose verdict was already a foregone conclusion.

I could but envy my opponent for the ease with which his case had been won, and my own sensitive feelings at defeat gave place to pity and commiseration for the unhappy prisoner.

When my time came to argue in his behalf, I was ill-at-ease and could but talk at random, so I sat down in confusion, and awaited the verdict I knew must be delivered. Guilty!

I heard scarcely a word of the solemn charge that fell from the lips of the judge, as a silence, almost unearthly, pervaded the crowded room.

At its conclusion, without retiring, the jury held a short consultation, and announced that they had arrived at their verdict.

"Guilty!"

Yes; and the word had scarcely died out upon the lips of the foreman, when a clear, childish voice sounded at my side:

"Hold! he is not guilty! I can prove it."

This startling announcement fell from the lips of Heloise Dejaure, and looking up, I saw the little beauty, her color heightened by her rapid walk, standing near me and holding in her hand an old stocking which was nearly full of some weighty substance.

"I have found the money," she cried, and the color deepened on her cheeks as all eyes were bent upon her.

I at once had her duly sworn, and her testimony was heard.

"Here is the money that grandpa thought was stolen," she said, turning out upon the table a pile of gold and silver coin.

"I found it a few moments ago, safely stowed away in a drawer of my own bureau,"

and here she stopped in her narrative, as if confused by the novel sights around her, and I was obliged to question her closely to get the details of her evidence.

"Grandpa Varnier is a somnambulist. He has hidden this money in his sleep. I have often known of his walking the house and garden in his sleep, and I suspected that he had hidden this money instead of its having been stolen, so I searched in both the house and garden, and at last found it as I have said."

"Mon Dieu! Mon Dieu!" exclaimed old Paul, in astonishment.

"But how about the earrings that Jean purchased?" I asked.

"With a blush, she pointed to her own pretty ears, where hung the little ornaments, and said:

"Grandpa would not buy me such things, so gave Jean a five-franc piece to buy them for me."

"And where did you get the five francs?"

"Grandpa gave the piece to me as a birthday present nearly two years ago."

And thus Jean Calot's innocence was made plain, and his acquittal followed.

Friends crowded around him in congratulations.

My story would be incomplete were I to omit saying that the veteran at last acknowledged himself vanquished, and his hatred of Jean Calot was turned to undying love and admiration.

Next to the Little Corporal, in the old man's heart, stood Heloise and Jean, and after their wedding, his old saber seemed to lose its attraction, and was laid away along with the cuirass and plumed hat.

And, perhaps, as wretched as any one who was neither hungry, or crime-stricken, or mourning over their dead, was Frank Larcher, as he sauntered to his father's office, for his short day's work over his books.

And it was Maud, of course; Maud Templeton, his darling little *fiancée*, who was so dreadfully angry and cold and indifferent, whom he had not seen or heard from for weeks and weeks.

They had been weeks of misery to him. He had cooled off from his anger almost before he reached home that night, but he was proud and unyielding as long as he entertained, first a surety, then a hope of Maud's humbling herself and sending for him, in which case he intended to be very high, mighty, and gradually descend to the kissing and forgiving stage.

But Maud didn't send, and gradually his pride died a natural death, and a vague restlessness seized him, and regret, that deepened into positive misery and great longing to see her again and tell her how cruel he had been, and how grieved he was by her forgiveness so humbly.

But here it was May Day, and the breach was wider than ever, despite his wishes and longings; and, as he walked down-town this morning, more homesick for Maud than ever, he wondered what on earth he should do. Then all of a sudden, his grave, handsome face lightened, and he turned sharply around.

"I wonder it did not occur to me before," he said, as he sprang into a Broadway stage, and was driven up to the corner of Amity street, where he alighted at the florist's, and watched the construction of a tiny, dainty bouquet.

Then, back to the office, where he wrote a short note, that said:

"Maud, my darling, if you can forgive me my neglect, and still love me as dearly as I do you, be ready to tell me so at four, when I will come to you to hear my fate."

He sealed the plain envelope, but did not dare to think, with a trembling doubt, that perhaps she might refuse to read it, if she saw his writing. Nevertheless, he was happier than many a day had found him, after he had dispatched bouquet and note by a messenger to Frank.

"I wonder if he did not occur to me before," he said, as he sprang into a Broadway stage, and was driven up to the corner